

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 32003

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: XT, OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS), FR
SUBJ: INVITATION TO THE SECRETARY TO ADDRESS WEU
ASSEMBLY IN PARIS

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: KAI-UWE VON HASSEL, PRESIDENT OF THE WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION (WEU) ASSEMBLY HAS WRITTEN THE SECRETARY INVITING HIM TO ADDRESS THE ASSEMBLY ON AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY DURING THE ASSEMBLY'S NEXT SESSION IN PARIS, NOVEMBER 28-DECEMBER 1. OBVIOUSLY, THE ASSEMBLY HAS ISSUED THE INVITATION IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT THE SECRETARY WILL BE IN PARIS DURING THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT. ACTION REQUESTED: GUIDANCE WITH WHICH TO RESPOND TO THE WEU. END SUMMARY.

2. AMBASSADOR RECEIVED NOVEMBER 2 AN INFORMATION COPY OF THE FOLLOWING LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY FROM VON HASSEL, DATED OCTOBER 20:

BEGIN TEXT.

THE ASSEMBLY OF WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION, THE EUROPEAN ASSEMBLY WITH RESPONSIBILITIES IN DEFENCE MATTERS, ATTACHED GREAT IMPORTANCE TO BEING FULLY ACQUAINTED WITH UNITED STATES VIEWS ON MATTERS WHICH AFFECT EUROPEAN SECURITY. FOR MANY YEARS, THE ASSEMBLY'S CONTINUING INTEREST IN THESE VIEWS HAS BEEN

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DEMONSTRATED BY THE INFORMATION VISITS WHICH ITS COMMITTEES HAVE PAID TO THE UNITED STATES, WHERE THEY HAVE ALWAYS BEEN WARMLY WELCOMED BY YOUR AUTHORITIES.

IN THE SAME SPIRIT THE PRESIDENTIAL COMMITTEE, THE ASSEMBLY'S STEERING BODY, EXPRESSED THE WISH AT ITS MEETING ON 4TH OCTOBER THAT YOU BE INVITED TO ADDRESS

THE ASSEMBLY ON AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY. MY COLLEAGUES AND I SINCERELY HOPE THAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO BE WITH US IN PERSON AT OUR NEXT SESSION, TO BE HELD IN THE CHAMBER OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC, PALAIS D'ENA, PARIS 16E., FROM 28TH NOVEMBER TO 1ST DECEMBER 1977, THE AGENDA OF WHICH I ENCLOSE.

I HOPE THAT I MAY HAVE THE PLEASURE OF WELCOMING YOU TO THE ASSEMBLY. END TEXT.

3. BACKGROUND: THE WEU ASSEMBLY WAS CREATED BY THE BRUSSELS TREATY OF 1948. IT IS COMPOSED OF 89 PARLIAMENTARIANS REPRESENTING THE SEVEN WEU MEMBER NATIONS: BELGIUM, FRANCE, ITALY, LUXEMBOURG, THE NETHERLANDS, THE FRG, AND THE UK. PARLIAMENTARIANS IN THE ASSEMBLY REPRESENT ALL POLITICAL PARTIES WITH BOTH THE COMMUNIST PARTIES OF FRANCE AND ITALY HOLDING SEATS. THE ASSEMBLY MEETS TWICE A YEAR, USUALLY IN PARIS, TO DISCUSS DEFENSE, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL MATTERS OF CONCERN TO MEMBER STATES. AS A TREATY ALLIANCE THE WEU HAS BEEN ECLIPSED BY NATO. THE ASSEMBLY, WHOSE RESOLUTIONS AND REPORTS HAVE NO BINDING EFFECT ON MEMBER STATES, CONTINUES TO MEET AS THE ONLY EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY CHARGED BY TREATY WITH "RESPONSIBILITIES IN DEFENSE MATTERS". TO OUR KNOWLEDGE NO US CABINET OFFICER HAS EVER
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ADDRESSED THE WEU ASSEMBLY. VARIOUS SENIOR US MILITARY OFFICIALS HAVE DONE SO AND GENERAL HAIG IS SCHEDULED TO ADDRESS THE ASSEMBLY ON NOVEMBER 29.

4. RECOMMENDATION: WE SEE NO NEED FOR THE SECRETARY TO ADDRESS THE WEU ASSEMBLY UNLESS HE IS SEEKING A PUBLIC FORUM WHILE IN PARIS. WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND AGAINST ACCEPTANCE OF THE INVITATION.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: WE ASSUME THAT THE DEPARTMENT WILL BE REPLYING FORMALLY TO VON HASSEL'S INVITATION. WE REQUEST THAT WE BE AUTHORIZED TO INFORM THE WEU STAFF OF THE SECRETARY'S DECISION AS SOON AS IT IS MADE.
HARTMAN

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